

A better way to travel,
today and tomorrow

TAB 5 PROJECT BENEFIT AND COMPATIBILITY

5.a Community and Commonwealth Benefits

Describe the significant benefits to the community, region or state. Identify any state benefits resulting from the project, including the achievement of state transportation policies or other state goals.

5.a.1 Benefits to the Community

The Dulles SmartLink team has designed the proposed Dulles Toll Road (DTR) enhancements to deliver maximum benefit to the Dulles Corridor community through active management, improved customer service, and continuous community engagement. Tabs 4.a and 4.b of this proposal outline the significant beneficiaries within the Dulles Corridor community.

Key community benefits include:

- Reduced congestion and faster commutes for residents living in the corridor
- High level of customer service and overall responsiveness to the communities
- Enhanced potential for economic growth along the entire corridor, but particularly in the existing business areas
- Improved access to the significant business areas of Tysons Corner and Reston
- Improved mobility between Washington, D.C., the Washington Dulles International Airport, and the communities in between

Commercial areas will also benefit from the completion of the project, particularly those areas where regional accessibility will be improved with expanded connections to the DTR. Accessibility is a major factor in establishing land value and in supporting commerce. Businesses that cannot easily deliver their products or services to market, or whose employees cannot easily travel to and from work, are at a competitive disadvantage. Thus, the enhanced DTR will greatly improve regional accessibility for many areas – primarily those located directly along the corridor.

Tab 5 Project Benefit and Compatibility

5.a Community and Commonwealth Benefits

5.a.2 Benefits to the Commonwealth

The Dulles SmartLink proposal offers substantial benefits to the Commonwealth, including significant economic, social, and environmental benefits and transportation enhancements.

The Dulles Corridor, anchored by Tysons Corner on the east and Washington Dulles International Airport on the west, will continue to grow in stature as the center of economic development in Northern Virginia.

Safety, air quality, and planning benefits will also be realized.

The Dulles SmartLink proposal is compatible with the transportation and land use plans of most major local governments in the Dulles corridor, as well as with statewide plans and policies.

At the statewide level, the VTrans 2025 study included recommendations to maximize the use of non-state funding to implement much needed transportation improvements. The study specifically identified the PPTA as a means of accomplishing this goal.

The study also identified the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project as a significant transportation priority for the communities of Northern Virginia. The assumptions made by Dulles SmartLink in relation to the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project are detailed in Tab 4.a of this proposal.

Our proposal is compatible with the transportation and land use plans along the Dulles Corridor.

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At the regional level, the Northern Virginia 2020 Transportation Plan recommended the establishment of an HOV network throughout the region as a critical component of the regional transportation plan. The enhancements proposed by Dulles SmartLink will make the DTR an integrated part of the region's HOV network.

5.b Economic Benefits

Describe significant benefits to the state's economic condition. Discuss whether this project is critical to attracting or maintaining competitive industries and businesses to the state or region.

The DTR enhancements and their association with the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project will provide significant benefits to the Commonwealth's economic condition. Northern Virginia is the fastest growing region in the Commonwealth, and the Dulles Corridor is a major east-west corridor in the region, linking Washington, D.C., and the Washington Dulles International Airport.

The continued growth in jobs and local economies in this corridor is of vital importance to the Commonwealth, and transportation improvements are needed to service this growth. In previous sections of this proposal, we have noted the critical importance of accessibility to economic development, and we have identified specific employment centers (Table 4.a-1) in the region where access would be improved significantly once the DTR enhancements are completed.

Transportation improvements are needed to support the growth in the Dulles Corridor.

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The benefits to the economic condition of the Commonwealth, particularly Northern Virginia, will be:

- **Increased travel alternatives.** Currently, the travel choices in the Dulles Corridor are limited, and congestion is increasing. Transportation choices for residents will be improved through enhancements to the DTR and bringing forward the completion of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, while also achieving faster travel times for communities in the Dulles Corridor. Travel options will serve to stimulate the economies and reinforce current job opportunities throughout the Dulles Corridor.
- **Direct access to major employment centers.** In conjunction with the Capital Beltway HOT Lanes Project (currently under NEPA review), this project will offer faster and more direct access to major employment centers along the Dulles Corridor and Capital Beltway, such as Merrifield and Tysons Corner.
- **Regional network solution.** This proposal, coupled with the Capital Beltway HOT Lanes, will provide the beginning of a series of regional network improvements. Such a network will promote economic growth, improved access to regional economic centers, and better mobility for residents and businesses.
- **Managed congestion-free transportation.** The DTR enhancements will reduce congestion in this crucial corridor, lowering vehicle operating costs and improving safety and efficiency across the network. The economic losses resulting from traffic congestion are well documented. This project will reduce those losses.

Tab 5 Project Benefit and Compatibility

5.b Economic Benefits

- **Available financial resources.** Self-financing the project and providing the Commonwealth with a Concession payment will free up public sector resources for use on other transportation infrastructure projects, providing even greater economic benefit to the Dulles Corridor, Northern Virginia, and the Commonwealth.
- **Attractiveness of region due to multi-modal infrastructure.** While economic development in Northern Virginia has generally been robust, there have been instances in the past where employers have left the area principally due to traffic congestion. The extent to which these businesses relocated to other sites in Virginia – as opposed to leaving the Commonwealth – is not known, but one of the most dramatic departures has been a major company that relocated its headquarters from Northern Virginia to Florida largely due to traffic congestion. If significant improvements to the regional transportation system are not provided, departures could be expected to accelerate as the region's population grows and congestion worsens.

5.b.1 Moving More People Faster

Another economic benefit of this project is its ability to move more people with improved travel times. Reduced congestion will increase average speeds on the DTR. Many drivers will gladly pay a premium to reach their destination faster because their time is worth more than the toll.

Enhancements will reduce congestion and improve average speeds.

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5.b.2 Economic Benefits Delivered Through Funding of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project

The assumptions made by Dulles SmartLink about the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project are detailed in Tab 4.a. Based on these assumptions, we believe Dulles SmartLink's Concession payment will provide the Commonwealth with the opportunity to allocate funds to other transportation development priorities throughout the Dulles Corridor earlier than originally planned.